

P. Kaiser, Robert G. Kaiser, Dennis Shaul

Work of CIA With Youths At Festivals Is Defended

By Robert G. Kaiser
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Gloria Steinem, a New York free-lance writer, acknowledged in an interview yesterday that she worked closely with the Central Intelligence Agency to organize groups of American young people to attend World Youth Festivals in Vienna and Helsinki in 1959 and 1962.

She strongly defended her actions and had great praise for the CIA agents with whom she collaborated. "I found them liberal and farsighted and open to an exchange of ideas," she said.

"I never felt I was being dictated to at all."

Miss Steinem was director of the Independent Research Service, a group that sponsored the trips of several hundred young Americans to Vienna and Helsinki. Its activities have been financed by a number of foundations, including the Independence Foundation of Boston, already cited by the National Student Association as a conduit of CIA funds.

First Admission

This was the first admission by anyone connected with the Research Service that it had collaborated with the CIA.

Miss Steinem said yesterday that she had worked extensively with CIA agents in this country and at the two Youth Festivals.

She said the budget for Research Service activities at the Helsinki Festival was more than \$100,000. She declined to say how much of that was CIA money.

Several hundred young Americans went to Helsinki with Research Service aid to offer an alternative to the Communist line of the Festival.

The Research Service also helped pay for a daily newspaper put out in three languages during the Festival by a largely American staff but under the ultimate control of a Finnish editor.

All Controlled by Reds

There have been eight World Youth Festivals since World War II. The first six



Dennis Shaul

Gloria Steinem had praise for the CIA while recounting her collaboration with them in organizing student groups to attend international meetings. She is wearing a chinchilla ringed gown in this picture at a supper party for the Shakespeare Festival Committee in New York last June.

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were held behind the Iron Curtain. They have all been controlled by Communists.

Miss Steinem said yesterday that "almost none" of the people who went to Vienna or Helsinki with the Research Service knew that the CIA was helping to pay for their trip.

She also said that no member of either Research Service delegation had passed information to the CIA. "We only planned the best ways to operate," she said. "They wanted to do what we wanted to do—present a healthy, diverse view of the United States."

She said the Research Service was started without CIA funds, but that the Agency approached her soon after the organization was set up and offered to help.

"The CIA was the only one with enough guts and foresight to see that youth and student affairs were important," she said.

She first decided that youth politics was important during a two-year visit to India after graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Smith College in 1956.

At the Helsinki Festival in 1962, Miss Steinem was co-director of the Research Service, with Dennis Shaul, a former president of the National Student Association.

Shaul, now a lawyer in Akron, Ohio, told The Washington Post yesterday that he knew CIA money was helping to finance the Research Service.

"There was always legitimate money involved, too," Shaul said. "To this day I don't know how much CIA money there was."

Shaul said of the Research Service delegation that his only job was "to bring together a group of young people who were representative of America."

"We had Minnesota school teachers who were farther right than Bill Buckley," Shaul said, "as well as members of Students for a Demo-

cratic Society. Nobody told them what to say."

Shaul also insisted that no Research Service reports had been given to the CIA. He said only a very few of the people involved in the Research Service knew anything about the CIA connection.

"I am not at all apologetic or ashamed of what I did," Shaul said. "The Helsinki Festival was a disaster from their (the Communist world's) point of view, and I think we can take a good deal of credit for that."

The Research Service now maintains an office in Washington at 1221 Connecticut ave., nw.

The current director is Eugene A. Theroux, a law student who was associate director of Young Citizens for Johnson in 1964.

Theroux said yesterday: "There is a possibility of a congressional inquiry on this matter and I am therefore going to withhold further comment."

Since Theroux took over, two World Youth Festivals have been canceled. One was to have been held in Algeria in July, 1965. It was canceled when President Ahmed Ben Bella was overthrown. A second Festival scheduled for Accra, Ghana, in the summer of 1966 was called off after the ouster of President Kwame Nkrumah.

P. Steinman, Gloria